

STANDARDS PRESENTATION  
TO  
CALIFORNIA OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH STANDARDS BOARD

PROPOSED STATE STANDARD,  
TITLE 8, DIVISION 1, CHAPTER 4

Add new section 5120 to read as follows:

Section 5120. Health Care Worker Back and Musculoskeletal Injury Prevention Plan.

- (a) Scope and Application. This Section shall apply in all general acute care hospitals. Exception: This Section shall not apply to general acute care hospitals within the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation or the State Department of Developmental Services.
- (b) As part of the injury and illness prevention programs required by Section 3203 of Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations, or any successor law or regulation, employers shall adopt a patient protection and health care worker back and musculoskeletal injury prevention plan. The plan shall include a safe patient handling policy component reflected in professional occupational safety guidelines for the protection of patients and health care workers in health care facilities.
- (c) An employer shall maintain a safe patient handling policy at all times for all patient care units, and shall provide trained lift teams or other support staff trained in safe lifting techniques in each general acute care hospital. The employer shall provide training to health care workers that includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- (1) The appropriate use of lifting devices and equipment.
  - (2) The five areas of body exposure: vertical, lateral, bariatric, repositioning, and ambulation.
  - (3) The use of lifting devices to handle patients safely.
- (d) As the coordinator of care, the registered nurse shall be responsible for the observation and direction of patient lifts and mobilization, and shall participate as needed in patient handling in accordance with the nurse's job description and professional judgment.
- (e) For purposes of this section, "lift team" means hospital employees specifically trained to handle patient lifts, repositionings, and transfers using patient transfer, repositioning, or lifting devices as appropriate for the specific patient. Lift team members may perform other duties as assigned during their shifts. A general acute care hospital shall not be required by this section to hire new staff to comprise the lift team so long as direct patient care assignments are not compromised.
- (f) For purposes of this section, "health care worker" means a lift team member or other staff responsible for assisting in lifting patients who is a hospital employee specifically trained to handle patient lifts, repositioning, and transfers using patient transfer, repositioning, and lifting devices as appropriate for the specific patient.
- (g) For the purposes of this section, "safe patient handling policy" means a policy that requires replacement of manual lifting and transferring of patients with powered patient transfer devices, lifting devices, and lift teams, as appropriate for the specific patient and consistent with the employer's safety policies and the professional judgment and clinical assessment of the registered nurse.
- (h) A health care worker who refuses to lift, reposition, or transfer a patient due to concerns about patient or worker safety or the lack of trained lift team personnel or equipment shall not,

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based upon the refusal, be the subject of disciplinary action by the hospital or any of its managers or employees.

Note: Authority cited: Section 142.3, Labor Code. Reference: Sections 142.3 and 6403.5, Labor Code.